



**Northgate Community center and Park  
PAT Meeting #8  
Jan. 26, 2004  
Meeting Notes**

**PAT Members Present:** Shawn Olesen, Barbara Maxwell, John Cash, Marilyn Firlotte, Velva Maye, Michelle Rupp, Jeanne Hayden, Sue Geving, Frank Lufkin, William Lowe

**PAT Members Not Present:** LeAnne Hendrix-Barer

**Staff Present:** Tim Motzer, Parks Project Manager; Maureen A. O'Neill, NE Parks and Recreation Manager; Joelle Ligon, Public Relations Specialist

**Designers Present:** Bob Hull, Architect from Miller | Hull; Kurt Stolle, Project Manager for Miller | Hull; Mark Brand, Site Workshop; Jack Johnson, Site Workshop.

**7:05 p.m. Welcome**

- Tim welcomed everyone, and reviewed the meeting objectives, which included reaching consensus on the 60% Design Development drawings presented by Miller | Hull.
- There were no changes to the agenda or to the Jan. 12, 2004 Meeting Notes.

**7:08 p.m. Comments from Visitors**

- There were no visitors.

**7:09 p.m. Discussion from previous week's PAT e-mail exchange**

- There were no e-mails for discussion.

**7:10 p.m. 60% Design Development Presentation**

- Bob Hull of Miller | Hull outlined the major changes in the design. They include the change in placement of the playground, the site angle, the view and safety issues relative to the park and the street.
- Bob explained that the playground now becomes a greater part of the plaza, which activates the area and gives it synergy.
- The changes also relieve some of the "site pinching" that will occur with the eventual 5,000-square-foot library expansion. The changes make it so that when the library does expand, the walkway from 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue can be re-configured in a way that it still allows visual and pedestrian access to the community center north entrance.

- There are now two entrances at the library. Both lead right into the front desk area.
- The way that M|H has reconnoitered the site gives the playground 100 square feet more, and 4,000 more square feet to the lawn.
- M|H added a passive picnic area on the south side of the lawn and created a gentle slope at the north end.
- Designers addressed the safety issue on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue with low seating walls that are 18 inches tall and 16 inches wide. These create a barrier to the street, and also act as furniture, giving users a place to sit. Designers also added a second row of trees, which creates a permeable barrier. Also, there will 12 feet of sidewalk between the edge of the property and the lawn area. All together, there will be a seating wall, a double row of trees, 12 feet of sidewalk, and an additional 10 feet of low-walls, grass and trees between the lawn and the street.
- The library north entrance is now sunken. The ADA entrance to the library is on the east side of the building. There is a 5% grade, which is in keeping with ADA requirements. Also, there will be three ADA parking spaces. That is the minimum required.
- The total number of parking spaces will be 66 (64 is the minimum required).
- Stormwater management: there are two types of water coming off the site. There is “dirty” water from the parking lot, then there is “clean” water from the roofs and the site. The stormwater wetland – or rain garden – will “clean” the water before it goes into a subterranean concrete vault.
- **Question:** How will you experience the drain? **Answer:** It looks like a water feature. It’s called a runnel, and would run through the site. Too much water there would impede pedestrian traffic. There’s also the potential to re-use rain water for irrigation. **Follow-up question:** Won’t sediments clog irrigation heads? **Follow-up answer:** We’ll use filters. **PAT comment:** That becomes a maintenance cost issue.
- There will be nooks in the plaza for passive enjoyment that visually connects to the rest of the site.
- We have been working with Nikki McClure, the 1% for Art artist. We have been looking at her materials and seeing how they integrate into the site. We want to work as much as possible to incorporate the theme of her artwork into the site.

- There will be a slight grade going south on the sidewalk in front of the community center. It will feel pretty much flat, as the site differential is about one foot.
- M|H also has been working with the Parks trails staff to develop a good trail at the south end of the site. They also are discussing the possibility of Parks trails staff building the trail as a cost-savings measure. The trail would likely be shored up with standard railroad tie timbers. **Question:** Will there be handrails? **Answer:** We don't know just yet. It's possible, depending on the Parks standards and how steep the slope is.
- There are three bus stop locations being considered: one to the north of the site, one directly in front of the site, and one at south end of the site. M|H opposes the middle choice. The southern stop we believe would be better because while there will be noise and fumes, it will activate the area.
- Tim said that that Parks and the Library are looking at the bus shelter as an opportunity for additional art on the site. We don't know yet who would pay for that.
- We also are having discussions about doing something different with the utility lines. The Seattle Department of Transportation has the lead in terms of working with City Light to underground or move the utilities. Potentially, there could be an emphasis on doing this throughout the Northgate area.
- **Question from the whole PAT:** When will we know what's happening with this? We want to make sure that we get to weigh in on this issue and unanimously support the undergrounding of utilities in the Northgate area. **Answer from Parks:** Tim said he would follow up on the PAT's question and get back to them regarding how to proceed on making their recommendation.
- The general form of the building is that the activity spaces are on the west side. These rooms include the teen/game room at the south. These two spaces are connected. In the middle is the fitness room. In the north end are the meeting room and arts room.
- The northern entrance now has a double vestibule. Plumbing and power will be installed at the outside of the north entrance. There will be a 10-foot hallway that has a gentle slope. Each of these rooms has 8'x8' windows that face into the community center.

- There is a lot of glass on the western side of the building. Some of the windows will be operable. There was a general discussion about the benefits and costs of various types of operable windows. Tim noted that the last new community center that the City built had no operable windows and that turned out to be a less-than-beneficial idea. In the end, it was decided that M|H would look into adding more operable windows, and that the discussion was still open on the various kinds of windows that could be used.
- There is an 18-inch seating wall with inset areas. M|H is looking into inseting the seating areas with plexiglass behind them.
- The ceiling will be made of wood, steel and skylights.
- The south entrance has been improved. The plaza is now bigger. There is a bay window and patio wall at the south end of the building. This is where the multi-purpose room will be. The multi-purpose room is perched above the site and looks down into Thornton Creek.
- The multi-purpose room can be used for meetings, gatherings, adult dance, rentals, etc. This space will be especially good for rentals. A slider door at the southwest entrance of the multi-purpose room could be locked when the room is not in use to ensure security of the building. There is a pass-through from the multi-purpose room to the kitchen.
- There is a back door at the kitchen so that the garbage can be taken out easily.
- There is now a four-foot cubbyhole storage area at the north end of the gym, underneath the child care area.
- There will be radiant slab floor heating in the activity rooms. Supplementary heat will be added along the windows where needed. There will be no air conditioning in the gym, but there will be air conditioning in the offices and the multi-purpose room.
- Budget issues are still being worked out. M|H just sent the 90% drawings to the cost estimator. Our goal is to come in at or below the amount budgeted for construction. If it comes in under budget, there is a 5% additive possibility. (Maureen indicated that this could be used for things like a large, drop-down divider, which divides the gym into two sections.)

### **8:30 p.m Feedback from the PAT**

- General comments from the PAT:

- Across the board, PAT members were very pleased with the overall design, and with many of the changes that had been made in response to issues raised by the group. Many in the group liked the fact that more emphasis had been placed on the integrity of the plaza as well as on the second or south entrance. Many liked the fact that the children's garden had been moved north. Several PAT members were interested in continuing to work with the artist to incorporate as much of her creative vision as possible, while also adding color to the outside of the facility.
- Most of operable windows in the activity rooms have been taken out of the updated design. (**M|H feedback:** Each room has one operable window; the windows are more for humanity than for ventilation.) I would like to see more operable windows. There are possible safety issues with leaving windows open at night, but Maureen said that community center staff go around and check to make sure all the windows are closed. Seems like there's a lot of solar heat coming into the activity rooms. (**M|H feedback:** the rain garden is designed to mitigate some of that heat.)
- I like the second entrances to the community center and library. I am concerned about the eventual loss of open space with the planned library expansion. We should look at doing something for that expansion, other than taking up more park space. Can we go up, instead of out? (**M|H feedback:** The library, like the community center, does not like to build up because of the complications in running the operation, but it is certainly something we could float to them.)
- This is a park in an urban setting, so we will have to deal with urban issues like busses and traffic. That's just the reality. It looks like the planting strip in the parking area is large, is that true. (**M|H feedback:** Yes, we kept it on the larger side.)
- I am concerned about skateboarders on the low walls.
- General questions from the PAT:
  - Can you take the telephones out of the hallway in front of the bathrooms and put in storage? (**M|H feedback:** per the Parks Departments' specifications, we need to have phones there.)

- Where will the vending machines go? (**M|H feedback:** We have no space allocated for them now. Looks like we'll have to go back and look at where we can put those in.)
- What is the flooring in the game room going to be comprised of? (**M|H feedback:** vinyl tiles.)
- Would it be possible to get a kiln here for pottery? (**Parks feedback:** we have a city policy of offering pottery classes in select locations. Currently, we already have a kiln in this area. That's at Green Lake. The kilns are expensive to operate and the clay is very messy, so we keep the pottery at select locations.)
- Could the cut-outs into the gym wall be arches? (**M|H feedback:** we don't generally do arches.)
- Can we put in a fountain/water feature? (**M|H feedback:** There are three drinking fountains planned for the site. Parks does not like to do water features because of the expense of construction and maintenance.)
- Do we have a good display area? (**M|H feedback:** We do not have a set place right now for a bulletin board. We will look into putting in a display/bulletin board area.)
- Where are we going with this art and SDOT piece? (**Parks feedback:** There is federal money in this project, meaning that there is no allocation for art. SDOT is trying to allocate \$20,000 for art, but we still don't know about that.)
- What sort of signage will there be? And whatever you choose, please make it pedestrian friendly – not like Target across the street. (**Parks feedback:** we're still working on that piece, and we will certainly keep your desires in mind.)
- Will the PAT get to choose playground equipment? (**Feedback from M|H:** when we come back again, we'll bring some options for playground equipment with us.)
- General comments from Parks Staff:

- Parks' preference is to keep a covered trough because with the daycare being just on the other side, kids can come in on a rainy morning, get their feet wet, then have to go around all day with wet feet. So, we prefer an trench drain.
- The surface on the play area is the Parks standard of manufactured wood chips, or "Fibar."
- Tim indicated that Parks wants to look for opportunities to expand the flat area of grass, as the current configuration is a departure from the basic program, which indicates that there should be 20,000 square feet at approximately 2% grade. **(Feedback from the PAT: The PAT overwhelmingly prefers to keep the grass area as it is because they like the picnic area along the pathway and the location of the path.)**

#### **8:55 p.m Wrap up**

- We will have a regular PAT public meeting on **Thursday, Feb. 19, 2004, 6 - 8 p.m.**
- We will have our last public meeting for the Northgate project on Monday, Feb. 23, 2004.

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